



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**MEDIATION WITH MUSCLE: UNDERSTANDING  
WHEN MEDIATORS COMMIT RESOURCES TO CIVIL  
WAR NEGOTIATIONS**

by

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December 2015

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COMMIT RESOURCES TO CIVIL WAR NEGOTIATIONS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Practitioners and scholars have sought to enhance their understanding of how to end civil wars through negotiations, as these conflicts have become increasingly common since WWII. This study argues that mediators might use their resources or influence to incentivize or coerce the warring sides to consider negotiated resolution. The concept of an incentive-based mediation strategy suggests mediators can put “skin in the game” to facilitate negotiation or settlement. Statistical analysis demonstrates that inter-governmental organizations, such as the United Nations, are more likely to use these incentive strategies and that mediators use these strategies in countries considered neither democracies nor autocracies. These findings can inform policymakers how to leverage power and capability to facilitate negotiations in seemingly intractable civil war conflicts.



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AUC	Area Under the Curve
CGDK	Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
CWM	Civil Wars Mediation dataset
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IGO	Inter-governmental Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ROC	Receiver Operating Characteristic
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone



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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

After nearly 10 years of fighting in Afghanistan, members of the international community—who invested in the conflict’s outcome after 9/11—in 2011 began to explore the potential for a peaceful solution to the conflict between the Afghan government and the Taliban (Gall & Khapalwak, 2011). With prospects fading for a decisive government victory over the Taliban, members of the international coalition fighting in Afghanistan began efforts to promote a negotiated settlement among the warring factions (Khan, 2015; Koelbl & Stark, 2011; Koranyi, 2013). Four years after they began, these efforts have borne little fruit. The rise of the Islamic State in the Middle East and a more internationally active Russia has shifted international attention from Afghanistan as the coalition downsizes its military presence. To revivify negotiations, members of the international coalition might consider using their considerable leverage to incentivize the sides. By increasing or decreasing their military presence or financial contributions to Afghanistan, outside actors have the opportunity to change the status quo and pressure the sides to consider negotiating. Before making such an offer, outside actors would need to overcome their fear that such actions would lead to more short-term violence and diminish their influence in the country (Raghavan, 2015).

The challenges faced by the third parties attempting to mediate this conflict are not unique to Afghanistan. Potential mediators in many civil wars since 1946 have been rebuffed by the warring parties, who favored the pursuit of outright military victory over negotiation and compromise. This thesis suggests that third-party mediators could use their leverage—whether military or financial—to encourage the sides in a civil war to consider negotiation rather than continued fighting. This thesis builds on the existing scholarship on civil war mediation that has proliferated since the end of the Cold War. It uses recently developed data sources to look anew at how third-party mediators use their resources and capabilities to mediate civil wars, and it expands the current understanding of how mediators use their resources to encourage negotiation or settlement. This thesis



focuses on offers made by mediators to further negotiations, which might include starting, restarting, or advancing negotiations, or finalizing a settlement.<sup>1</sup>

Previous scholarship on civil war mediation has focused on mediators' strategies within the context of the negotiation and how mediators might influence the negotiation process (Bercovitch, 1996; Bercovitch & Gartner, 2006; Gartner, 2011; Regan, Frank, & Aydin, 2009). It has yet to explore fully when and why a mediator might put its own "skin in the game," and commit its own resources—not simply deploy its military to support one of the warring sides—to an external territory in conflict (Touval, 1975). The focus of this thesis is to define circumstances that might lead a civil war mediator to commit its own resources to facilitate continued negotiation or a final settlement. The current research draws on the Civil Wars Mediation (CWM) dataset<sup>2</sup> and points to the hypothesis that mediators (i) possess the capability to influence warring factions' decisionmaking by offering their own resources as enticements or coercion, (ii) can use both positive and negative levers to influence the negotiating sides, and (iii) must have both the capacity and incentive to consider such a strategy.

## **A. MEDIATION IN CIVIL WAR**

The study of international mediation in civil war has rapidly expanded in the years after the Cold War, as researchers have sought to understand the variables associated with political settlement (Bercovitch, 1996; Stedman, 1991; Walter, 1997; Zartman, 1989). Researchers have defined mediation in many ways. This thesis uses Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille's definition: "a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own efforts, whereby the disputing parties or their representatives seek the assistance, or accept an individual, group, state or organization's

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis uses references to restarting, furthering, or finalizing negotiations interchangeably, each referring to the mediator's intent to use its capabilities for potential negotiation and not for the outright military victory of one of the warring sides.

<sup>2</sup> The CWM dataset focuses exclusively on civil war mediation events. Its data include events and relevant technical details from 1946 to 2004 (DeRouen, Bercovitch, & Pospieszna, 2011). Its details include the territory, warring sides, conflict duration, mediation episodes, and the mediators involved. This author was provided a more current dataset by the CWM's authors for this analysis. The analysis in this thesis uses new research based on the updated CWM data set to examine mediators' use of incentives to affect negotiation, whether positively or negatively.



offer to help change, affect, or influence their perceptions or behavior, without resorting to physical force, or invoking the authority of the law” (1991, p. 8). Many scholars of international mediation use this definition, and because this thesis builds upon their research, using the same definition herein maintains consistency. This definition precludes the mediator from invoking legal and military power to coerce an agreement; the mediator can attempt only to influence the combatants through non-coercive means. The definition can also be applied to business and legal mediation, in addition to international civil war mediation. These three mediation fields face similar challenges, and drawing on the research in each can inform policymaking and research across the disciplines. In business, the mediator asserts no direct power over the parties in conflict, and derives power from each side’s acceptance of the mediator in that capacity. Similarly, in civil war mediation, the mediator “does not have authority to impose an outcome” (Wall, Stark, & Standifer, 2001, p. 375) even if the mediator has its own motivations for becoming involved or trying to reach a resolution. One significant difference in the mediation fields is that, unlike in the business or legal worlds, arbitration is not an option for international mediation (Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2008, p. 280; Goltsman, Hörner, Pavlov, & Squintani, 2009). Thus, if mediation in a civil war fails, the sides are likely to return to violence (Destradi & Vüllers, 2012). In short, an actor agrees to mediate a civil war with no power to compel the sides to any action or agreement, and both warring sides must voluntarily accept the third party as a mediator.

There have been at least 25 active civil wars in each calendar year since the mid-1970s (Roser, 2015).<sup>3</sup> Scholars are divided on the causes of civil war. Some argue that civil wars begin because the population does not feel represented by the government, leading to grievances (Buhaug, Cederman, & Rød, 2008; Cederman, Wimmer, & Min, 2010). Other scholars suggest civil wars start because the state is weak and cannot suppress or counter its internal opposition (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). By the time a mediator becomes involved in a conflict—when the conflict is ripe for mediation—each side has almost assuredly committed acts that lead to additional grievances on both sides,

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<sup>3</sup> The data source defined a civil war as an intrastate conflict between a government and a non-government actor where 1,000 battle deaths occurred in the given year (Roser, 2015).



which further sustains the animosity between the warring sides (Zartman, 1989). The mediator must address both the grievances that led to the civil war's start and the grievances that have manifested because of it. The latter generally include human rights abuses, exploitation of the population, or economic unbalance, among others. The difficulties in helping the warring parties overcome both their initial grievances and subsequent consequences of conflict is significant, and contributes to the conclusion that civil wars are less likely than interstate wars to be settled through mediation (Walter, 1997, 2002).

A mediator's motivation in facilitating a negotiated settlement is often tied to the mediator's own interests in the conflict's outcome (Melin & Svensson, 2009). For example, the mediator may have a special historical relationship with the territory (it might be a former colonial power, for example), sympathize with one of the sides in the conflict, or judge that the conflict risks causing further instability (Greig & Regan, 2008). Acting upon their interests to become a mediator poses risks. Should the negotiation fail, the mediator might suffer damage to its international reputation. It is important for a mediator to clearly understand its own motives in agreeing to intervene, as these motivations will foreshadow how deeply a mediator might invest in the negotiation process (Regan, 2010).

Scholars should view a mediator's efforts in the context of the mediator's goals. This perspective is the most useful because different types of mediators and their proximity to the conflict may dictate the interests that inspire them to consider intervening. Some mediators might seek to mediate because of their self-interest, as to support their preferred outcome. For example, as the world's hegemon, the United States has interest in maintaining its preeminent role, while states such as Russia or China might seek to mediate a civil war to disrupt the United States' position and enhance their country's prestige. Some studies suggest biased mediators, particularly those that favor the government, are more successful civil war mediators (Kydd, 2003; Svensson, 2007). Biased third parties might use more costly mediation strategies to ensure that the conflicts reach the mediator's preferred settlement. The United States may mediate a conflict to



preserve or promote democratic values. A third party probably will be motivated by its goals and interests when considering whether to mediate a civil war conflict.

Mediation is both risky and costly to the mediator, suggesting that mediators will become involved only when no other solution appears feasible: mediation occurs only in the most intractable of conflicts (Beardsley, 2011; Gartner, 2013). This selection effect may cause mediation to appear less successful because intractable and complex conflicts are, by definition, those that have withstood resolution by any means other than open warfare (Gartner, 2013; Svensson, 2006). Were each side's grievances minor, only narrowly held, or if one side had a distinct military advantage, the conflict could be resolved more easily, perhaps without outside mediation. When injecting themselves into a conflict as a mediator, an outside actor must be prepared to accept the risks and costs when they assess that intervention will address their own strategic interests.

## **B. IDENTIFYING A CONFLICT'S RIPENESS FOR RESOLUTION**

To be successful, a primary condition for mediation is that both sides in a civil war accept the third party—a generally independent outside actor that is not one of the main parties involved in the conflict—as the mediator (Moore, 2014). Mediation occurs when “both parties to the conflict formally or informally accept a mediator” (Frei, 1976, p. 69). The warring sides must accept the third party because the third party has no overarching authority to impose its will in the conflict. Thus, the warring sides can walk away from negotiations if they are dissatisfied with the mediation process. The mediator's potential interest in and entrance into the conflict will cause each side to consider the costs and benefits of accepting mediation (Mitchell, 1995). The warring factions can more easily evaluate a mediator if they know the mediator's preferences and how those preferences affect each side's incentives when considering negotiations (Clayton, 2013; Gent, 2011; Melin & Svensson, 2009; Mitchell, 1995).

## **C. REVIEWING MEDIATION STRATEGIES**

Mediators' involvement in civil wars varies in intensity, and the various strategies require introduction (Bercovitch et al., 1991). The least intense mediator strategy is a communication-facilitation strategy, where the mediator serves as a go-between,



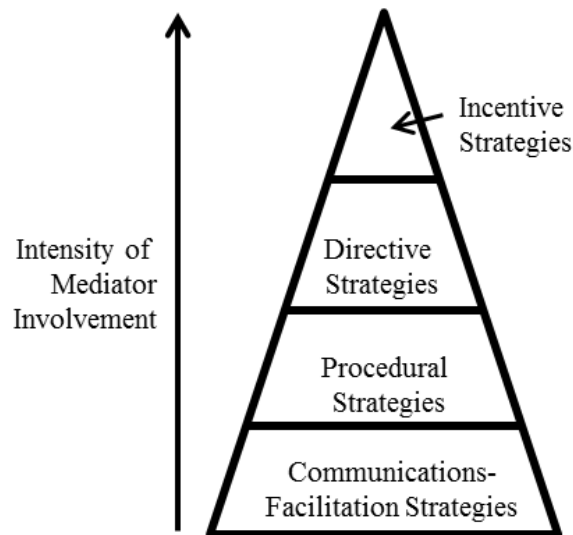
conveying information between the parties and ensuring the sides understand each other's statements, offers, and messages (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2006). Using this strategy, the mediator tries to develop confidence and trust between the two sides (Bercovitch & Houston, 2000). A more intense strategy, called a procedural strategy, is when the mediator accepts additional burdens in the mediation process and asserts more control over the negotiation's structural aspects, such as retaining the power to set the agenda or negotiating parameters (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2006; Watkins, 2003). The next most intense mediation strategy is a directive strategy, where a mediator provides incentives, and costs, within the negotiation (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2006). Put another way:

Directive strategies are identified as the “strategies by which the mediator actively promotes a specific solution or attempts to pressure or manipulate the parties directly into ending the dispute.” They involve such tactics as making specific proposals, pressing the parties to make concessions, suggesting particular settlements, emphasizing the costs of disagreement, threatening to withdraw, arguing each party's case to the other, and trying to change the parties' expectations. (Bercovitch & Wells, 1993, p. 6)

In a directive strategy, the mediator uses its power to direct the warring sides in the negotiation. Previous research suggests directive strategies are the most effective form of mediation (Bercovitch & Lee, 2003; Gartner, 2014a). The different mediation strategies and their relative intensity are illustrated in Figure 1. More intense mediation strategies almost always leverage less intense mediation strategies simultaneously to maximize potential gains. This is illustrated by the least intense mediation strategy, communications-facilitation, forming Figure 1's foundation. Some mediation techniques may not be exclusive to one category and may span across different strategies. For example, a mediator might use shuttle diplomacy to narrow the communications gap between the two sides—a communications-facilitation strategy—while also attempting to persuade one side to accept an offer—an aspect of a directive strategy. This demonstrates how more intense mediation strategies may interact with those of lesser intensity.



Figure 1. Relationship Between Mediation Strategies and Their Relative Intensity



This analysis will examine the aspects of directive strategies that require the mediator to use its power and resources to change the warring parties' perceptions; what this analysis terms *incentive strategies*. Incentive strategies constitute a subset of broader directive strategies and require the mediator to spend or withdraw its own resources as part of a mediation effort, and not simply to help the negotiation process.<sup>4</sup> As Figure 1 suggests, incentive strategies are the most intense mediation strategies.

As suggested in Figure 2, at the outset of a conflict, the government side is typically stronger and prefers fighting over negotiation because negotiation with the enemy conveys legitimacy and equal status to the side seeking to undermine the state. As the conflict continues, the government may become more amenable to negotiation if its influence or strength wanes (Zartman, 1989). Conversely, the opposition would welcome negotiations at the outset, but the longer a conflict goes on, the more confident it might be that it can militarily defeat the government. As the conflict continues, each side's interest in negotiation will increase or decrease depending on how each perceives the trajectory of the conflict, whether it is in their favor or not. Their interest in negotiation is generally

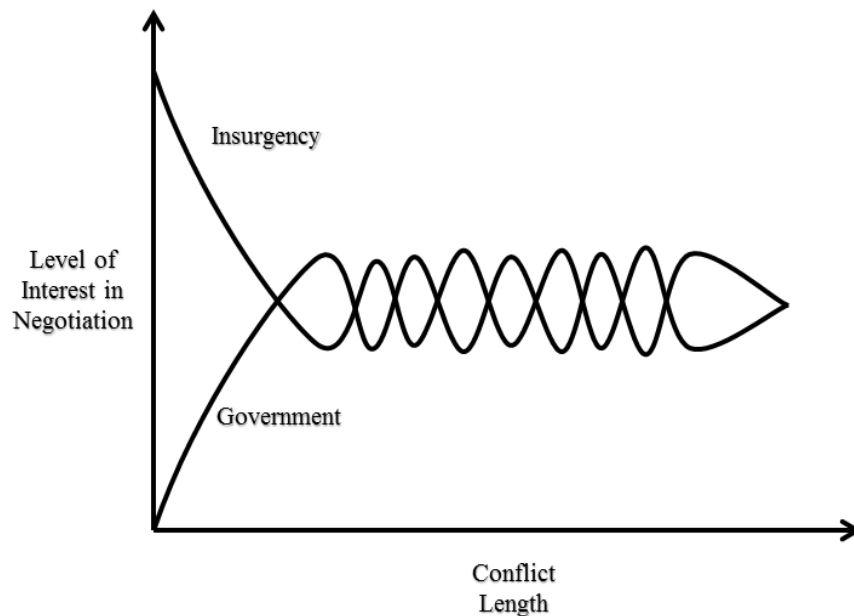
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<sup>4</sup> Other aspects of directive strategies include promoting a specific solution, applying pressure, or urging the parties to make concessions (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2006). Unlike incentive strategies, these strategies do not require a mediator to take on actual costs as part of a negotiation.



inversely related to their perception of their battlefield prospects: if they perceive they are winning militarily, they are less likely to negotiate. This is represented by the points at the bottom of each side's curve in Figure 2. The conflict must be at a certain point for both sides to meaningfully commit to negotiations, probably only after a period of fighting (Zartman, 1989). The sides are likely to have more interest in negotiation when there is a reversal of fortunes, when the side that previously perceived that it was winning perceives a change in the battlefield and the weaker side that is militarily ascendant, but not dominant, is willing to contemplate negotiations because of recent military success (Mooradian & Druckman, 1999). The point of ripeness, where negotiations can begin, is represented by the points of intersection in Figure 2. For example, the Balkan crisis only reached a political conclusion after the Serbs met several battlefield defeats that caused them to consider resolving the conflict through negotiation (Magaš & Žanić, 2001).

Figure 2. Warring Sides' Level of Interest in Negotiation as Related to Conflict Duration



Even after negotiations begin, looming violence is a constant threat to negotiations. The mediator must not only prevent the sides from walking away from negotiations, but also encourage the sides to invest sufficiently in the negotiation to, ultimately, make compromises with their previous enemy (Walter, 1997). Belligerent



factions of each side constantly threaten to derail negotiations. Each side is rarely so unified and cohesive as to allow its negotiators to act without extensive consensus building and persuasion among their own side—certain elements will disagree with the decision to negotiate (De Zeeuw, 2008; Stedman, 1991, 1997). Spoilers are “leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threaten their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it” (Stedman, 1997, p. 5). Spoilers are often attempting to undermine negotiations and encourage the continuation of the fight. When the spoiler faction is stronger than the group negotiating, the conflict is not yet ripe for successful negotiation—they are at a point on Figure 2 where the sides’ interests in negotiating do not align.

#### **D. PLAN OF THE PAPER**

To explore this topic more fully, I will first describe the theory of mediators using their non-offensive military resources for mediation—incentive strategies—and how this strategy differs from the less intensive mediation strategies. Second, I will describe the differences between incentive and directive strategies, the components of incentive strategies, and what motivates a mediator to implement an incentive strategy. Third, I will describe incentive strategies in both its positive and negative form. Fourth, I will map an empirical approach to the study of incentive strategies explaining conceptualization, independent variables, and empirical findings. Fifth, I will use two case studies to demonstrate how mediators have used incentive strategies. Finally, I will reiterate the main findings, discuss policy implications, and highlight opportunities for future study.



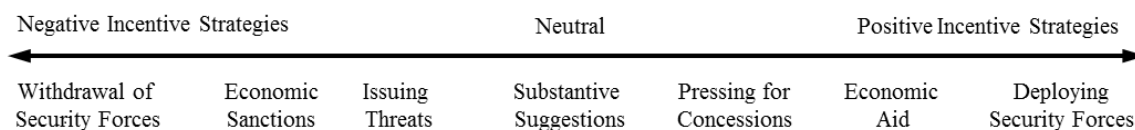
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## II. INCENTIVES: AN ADDITIONAL MEDIATION STRATEGY

I use the term incentive strategy—mediation with muscle—to align with the language used to describe other mediation strategies. I suggest that an incentive strategy is the most acute form of a directive strategy and is defined by the mediator using its resources or leverage to advance the negotiation process (Bercovitch, 1996). I define an incentive strategy as when a mediator ties the use of its peacekeeping or financial assets to the advancement of negotiations in an external civil war conflict. Using an incentive strategy, a mediator voluntarily risks its own resources and reputation to overcome negotiation obstacles. As Figure 3 suggests, it does not simply make threats or participate in the negotiation process, but volunteers to accept some substantial costs to change warring parties' calculations (Vasquez, Johnson, & Jaffe, 1996, p. 41; Stein, 1991). Mediator's contributions to the negotiation are conditioned on changes in the combatants' stances and behaviors—the application of leverage to influence the warring sides (Touval & Zartman, 1985, p. 12). It is worth discussing incentive strategies separately from directive strategies because, in an incentive strategy, a mediator has both the capability and the interest to make a commitment to the country in conflict, whereas some mediators might rely on leverage or threats within negotiations as other aspects of directive strategies. The two different types of incentive strategies, positive and negative, will be discussed separately. In short, incentive strategies are the most costly form of directive strategies. The different types of directive strategies and how they compare along a continuum of positive incentives and negative incentives are illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Spectrum of Directive Strategies



This analysis of incentive strategies distinguishes between strategies used during the negotiating process—where mediators might use other aspects of directive



strategies—and how mediators might accept costs outside the scope of or after negotiations to influence the warring sides during the negotiation process. Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille define directive strategies as when “a third party begins to affect the content of negotiations as well as the process. It is here that mediator influence begins to play a part, as he/she makes substantive suggestions and may even pressure the parties to accept them” (1991, p. 16). Isolating the incentive strategy aspects of directive strategies allows a greater degree of analytic specification than the broader category of directive strategies and permits the analysis of these most resource intensive mediation strategies. The less costly forms of directive strategies are represented toward the center of Figure 3 and include when the mediator might issue threats or make suggestions to each side. The middle strategies may appear positive or negative to the warring parties, but they do not require the mediator to make an actual investment in the territory’s future. Subsequent analysis may isolate other types of directive strategies and their impact on civil war conflicts and their outcomes.

Incentive strategies (in both its positive and negative forms), on the other hand, represent the most significant commitments a mediator can make to a civil war negotiation to influence the perceptions of the warring parties. Whether the incentive strategy is financial, the deployment of security forces in a peacekeeping role, or the withdrawal of strategic assets from a territory, they are the most involved mediation strategies and include a greater commitment because a mediator is willingly offering and accepting costs that it will have to pay either during or following the conclusion of negotiations. Consequently, incentive strategies are most commonly associated with powerful mediators because they possess the resources to support any pledge. For example, the reputation of the United Nations (UN) enhances incentive strategies because it has the power and capability to improve burden sharing among members and pool resources to increase the magnitude of an incentive strategy offer beyond what a single, or even small group of nations, is able to muster (Böhmelt, 2012; Svensonn, 2006). The mediator’s power is relative to the civil war, its location, and scope (Hopmann, 1996). Additionally, incentive strategies must be well-timed to maximize their potential impact



at a moment of ripeness—they cannot simply be applied at any point during the actor’s mediation efforts (Ott, 1972).

#### **A. HOW MEDIATORS MIGHT USE INCENTIVE STRATEGIES**

Incentive strategies are most often used in parallel with other mediation strategies. When less costly strategies are unsuccessful, a mediator might consider supplementing its work in the negotiation process by using an incentive strategy. For example, when using an incentive strategy, a mediator still facilitates communication between the two sides or sets the negotiation’s agenda. As depicted in Figure 1, more costly mediation strategies still probably include elements of less costly strategies. A mediator could not use an incentive strategy without helping the warring sides understand how the incentive strategy changes the negotiation; an element of a facilitation strategy. An incentive strategy independent of other mediation strategies is more likely to fail because the mediator is not maximizing all the points of leverage provided by its position in the negotiation. Because an incentive strategy is only an offer, the mediator can withdraw it if, at any point, it believes the offer did not have the desired effect on the perceptions of the warring sides.

#### **B. POSITIVE INCENTIVE STRATEGIES**

I define a positive incentive strategy as a mediator’s willingness to commit its security or financial resources to an external territory in conflict to incentivize negotiations, overcome negotiation stalemates, or facilitate resolutions.<sup>5</sup> A positive incentive strategy takes three common forms. First, a positive incentive strategy may include the deployment of troops or peacekeepers. For the purposes of this study, the mediator must promise the deployment of more than 500 troops in a peacekeeping role for a period lasting longer than 30 days.<sup>6</sup> I chose these numbers because the use of

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<sup>5</sup> This analysis will focus on a mediator’s incentive strategy offers, not on their implementation. Future study might explore incentive strategy’s execution, implementation, or measure their success.

<sup>6</sup> I use this arbitrary cutoff because it is likely to change the warring sides’ perception of the status quo, whereas smaller or shorter deployments may not. Additionally, these deployments are often extended, proving their utility. Future study may change the number or duration of any security force to identify how different definitions may affect the findings.



peacekeepers can help prevent a recurrence of violence following settlement (Doyle & Sambanis, 2000; Fortna, 2003; Fortna & Howard, 2008), and these definitions demonstrate a mediator's significant commitment to prevent a recurrence of violence. Security may be an overwhelming concern for both warring sides, and the mediator's offer to deploy a third-party force may overcome these concerns, which allows the negotiations to move to other issues of contention. Second, a positive incentive strategy might be a pledge of economic aid to help with a territory's economic recovery or act as a financial incentive for the parties at war. Such an offer might help in reconstruction or be designated for underdeveloped areas of the territory, potentially those where the insurgency started or is based (Cabestan & Pavković, 2013). I use a financial commitment of \$50 million in this study, a commitment substantial enough to have some sway with both sides in a conflict.<sup>7</sup> Lastly, a positive incentive strategy might include the use of military force, but only if it is directly tied to the warring parties' behavior in negotiations. This type of positive incentive strategy was used during the Balkans conflict when North Atlantic Treaty Organization mediators threatened military action if confronted with intransigence during negotiations (Greenhouse, 1995). In a positive incentive strategy, the mediator is willing to expend resources to help settle the conflict. In short, the mediator is *adding* something to the conflict to encourage negotiations.

### C. NEGATIVE INCENTIVE STRATEGIES

I define a negative incentive strategy as when a mediator withdraws its resources from a territory in civil war.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, a negative incentive strategy is when a mediator or actor pledges to cease its participation in a civil war conflict to facilitate negotiation. The two primary forms of negative incentive strategies are the withdrawal of

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<sup>7</sup> This, too, is an arbitrary cut off and, as with any security deployment, changing the level of commitment may change results and add to enhanced understanding of incentive strategies.

<sup>8</sup> I am only interested in mediators' offers of negative incentive strategies, though mediators might implement negative incentive strategies simultaneous to negotiations. The promise of implementing a negative incentive strategy can be difficult to monitor and confirm as outside support may become hidden, such as the use of troops disguised in local garb or the use of different methods to transfer funds.



military assets deployed to a civil war (regardless of their rules of engagement)<sup>9</sup> or negative financial incentives, such as an actor's cessation of financial backing to a warring faction or the imposition of economic sanctions. By removing this influence, the mediator disrupts the status quo. The action must be connected directly to negotiations to be considered a negative incentive strategy, either through public statements linking the two, or pledges among the interested parties that their external support will cease unless negotiations start or advance. A mediator might use a negative incentive strategy to offset an outside influence that is perceived to be sustaining or worsening a civil war conflict, or withdraw its own support for one of the sides to improve the prospects for negotiated settlement. In the case of an intervening regional actor, a mediator might use its influence to limit that country's activities or incentivize that country to halt its actions by granting it a role in negotiations. As demonstrated by Table 1, mediators have used negative incentive strategies 16 times since 1946, accounting for approximately one-fifth of all incentive strategies during that period. These strategies are probably rare because they often require a state or organization to sacrifice its own perceived interests for the betterment of the country at war, and this is unlikely to occur absent incentive to do so. Negative incentive strategies differ from positive incentive strategies in that such strategies save the mediator money or the use of resources in the short-term.

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<sup>9</sup> Outside military forces deployed to a civil war territory are fighting primarily for the benefit of one side, though my definition of a negative incentive strategy was independent of the deployed force's rules of engagement.



Table 1. Negative Incentive Strategies since 1946

<b>Year</b>	<b>Territory</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Opposition</b>	<b>Mediators</b>	<b>Negative Incentive Strategy</b>
1946	Iran	Iran	Republic of Azerbaijan	Soviet Union, United Kingdom, United Nations, United States	Soviet Union agreed to withdraw troops (Azerbaijan Crisis, n.d.)
1965	Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic	Military Faction	Organization of American States, United States	United States withdrew forces (De Onis, 1965; Yates, 1988)
1966	Arab Republic of Yemen	Arab Republic of Yemen	Royalists	Tripartite Committee (Foreign Ministers from Iraq, Morocco, Sudan)	Egypt withdrew forces and Saudis halted provision of arms to the royalists ("Yemen Peace Plan," 1966)
1967	Arab Republic of Yemen	Arab Republic of Yemen	Royalists	Tripartite Committee (Foreign Ministers from Iraq, Morocco, Sudan)	Egypt withdrew forces and Saudis halted provision of arms to the royalists (Halliday, 2002, p. 10; Katz, 1992)
1981	Chad	Chad	Transition Government of National Unity	Organization of African Unity	French and Libyan Forces agreed to withdraw (Hollick, 1982; May & Massey, 1998)



<b>Year</b>	<b>Territory</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Opposition</b>	<b>Mediators</b>	<b>Negative Incentive Strategy</b>
1989	Cambodia	Cambodia	CGDK	Thailand, Vietnam	Withdrawal of Vietnamese troops (Um, 1990)
1991	Croatia	Croatia	Serbian Republic	European Community	Sanctions threatened against parties who did not agree to ceasefire (Tagliabue, 1991)
1993	Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh	Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Turkey, United States	Armenia agrees to withdraw troops from Nagorno-Karabakh ("Armenia and Azerbaijan Agree," 1993)
1994	Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh	Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia	Armenian troops withdrew from Nagorno-Karabakh (Walker, 1998)
1994	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Serbian Republic	United States	United States threatened additional sanctions (Schmitt, 1994)
1995	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Serbian Republic	United States	Threat of arms embargo (Greenhouse, 1995)
1999	Congo	Congo	3 Factions	Multiple African Leaders	Withdrawal of foreign forces (Smis & Oyatambwe, 2002)



<b>Year</b>	<b>Territory</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Opposition</b>	<b>Mediators</b>	<b>Negative Incentive Strategy</b>
2001	Macedonia	Macedonia	National Liberation Army	European Union	European Union made aid contingent on constitutional amendments (Ilievski & Talevski, 2009)
2002	Sudan	Sudan	Sudan People's Liberation Movement	United States	United States threatened sanctions (Lacey, 2002)
2008	Burundi	Burundi	National Liberation Forces	South Africa, Tanzania	Tanzania no longer willing to provide safe haven for rebels (Appel, 2008; Gettleman, 2008)
2008	Georgia	Georgia	South Ossetia	France, Russia	Russian agrees to withdraw troops from South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Barry, 2008)



When a negative incentive strategy removes a negotiating impediment, the offer might encourage warring sides to start or return to negotiations. This was the case during the Cambodian civil war when, in 1989, the Thai King began to mediate. Early in 1989, Vietnam agreed to withdraw its forces from Cambodia in exchange for renewed peace talks (Cima, 1990; Erlanger, 1989; Um, 1990).<sup>10</sup> Vietnam was only willing to do so contingent on negotiations resuming between the Cambodian government—Vietnam’s client—and the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) (Cima, 1990; Um, 1990).<sup>11</sup>

As an example of how a negative incentive strategy might be used, many scholars assess that the ongoing Afghan civil war cannot be solved unless Pakistan’s influence in the conflict is addressed (Rubin, 2007). Scholars and international officials suggest that Pakistan controls, and may even dictate, the Taliban’s actions (Rashid, 2008; Rubin, 2007). Assuming this is true, Pakistan might use a negative incentive strategy whereby it expels Taliban leaders from its territory, or makes their residency contingent on future negotiations with the Afghan government. Separately, international actors may threaten to withdraw aid to Pakistan or make the continuation of aid conditional based on Pakistan’s ability to facilitate negotiations between the warring Afghan sides.

International actors might also consider positive incentive strategies. For example, they might promise additional aid or the transfer of military technology to help Pakistan coerce the Taliban. The case of Tanzania and the Burundian civil war serves as a historical precedent: Tanzania’s expulsion of Burundian rebels from its territory in 2008 was a negative incentive strategy that helped facilitate the end of the Burundi civil war (Gettleman, 2008). There is no assurance that these strategies would lead to negotiations or a settlement, but the inference that Pakistan’s support for the Taliban prolongs the war suggests that engaging Pakistan in the negotiation process might jumpstart more

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<sup>10</sup> Vietnamese troops had been stationed in Cambodia since 1970, and they withdrew in September 1989 after the Thai King’s mediation efforts (Um, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> Subsequent information from both the CGDK and Thai intelligence suggests that the Vietnamese retained a military presence in Cambodia by disguising its soldiers as settlers and dressing their troops in Cambodian government uniforms (Um, 1990). Vietnam’s withdrawal did not lead to a settlement in 1989; the sides resolved the conflict peacefully in 1992 following additional mediation efforts.



productive negotiations (Laub, 2011; Waldman, 2010). I will expand on how the international community might use other negative and positive incentive strategies in the Afghan conflict in the case study section.

#### **D. INCENTIVE STRATEGIES' EFFECT ON A CONFLICT**

Mediators could use an incentive strategy to change the warring sides' perceptions of the status quo, thus causing them to reevaluate the costs and benefits of fighting vis-à-vis negotiation. By making a significant offer, the mediator might create what business mediation literature calls "value" for the sides to consider negotiating (Watkins, 2003). An incentive strategy expands the number of issues being negotiated, which gives the warring sides additional opportunities to realize gains from the negotiations (Watkins, 2003). If the sides judge that they have received value from a mediator's incentive strategy offer, they might be more willing to compromise on other issues because the incentive strategy allows them to return to their members and demonstrate that they negotiated successfully—they "won" something. In short, the new incentive might create opportunities for compromise. For example, a mediator's offer of peacekeepers might alleviate an insurgent side's hesitancy to disarm, allowing the insurgent side to claim value that a third-party will ensure their safety. The mediator, by serving as security guarantor, meets the basic human need for security, which allows the negotiation to move to other issues.

Incentive strategies are offers that change each side's perceptions of their interests. The mistrust common to civil war conflicts makes each side sensitive to perceived slights or offenses during negotiations (Höglund & Svensson, 2006; Kelman 1997; Stein, 1991; Walter 1999, 2002). An incentive strategy gives the warring sides an opportunity to save face and retain their reputation despite having to compromise during negotiations. They may not have anticipated the mediator's offer before or during negotiations, and the incentive strategy provides rewards for continuing negotiations or agreeing to a settlement. Overcoming negotiating impasses builds momentum toward other issues being negotiated, creating a link among different aspects of the negotiation (Watkins, 2003). While incentive strategies probably will not be solely responsible for



settling a civil war, they can help overcome barriers that have contributed to a conflict's intractability. By promising to take a stake in a negotiated settlement, the mediator changes the status quo, which is likely to prompt combatants to reconsider their stake in negotiations. Such an offer might increase momentum in negotiations as the creation of value overcomes one obstacle and provides opportunities for the sides to build trust.

Incentive strategies may also help overcome the mistrust between the warring sides that might lead to breakdowns in negotiations, whether due to the activity of spoilers or doubt over the other side's negotiating tactics (Greenhill & Major, 2007; Stedman, 1997; Walter, 1997). By creating value in new areas, mediators' offers may encourage the sides to remain at the negotiating table or finalize an agreement even when confronted with spoiler's obstacles. An incentive strategy gives a mediator more credibility and raises the stakes of negotiations—if each side views the incentive as valuable—because walking away risks the mediator withdrawing the offer if negotiations break down. This, incentive strategies can increase a negotiation's momentum or limit the negative affect of spoiler activity.

As a practical example, Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have largely been at an impasse since 2000 despite repeated international efforts to mediate, and some have suggested that the two-state solution is no longer feasible (Judt, 2003; Pressman, 2003; Tagliabue, 2014; Zartman, 1989). The international community has served various mediation roles in the conflict's negotiations: Norwegians mediated the Oslo Accords and the United States has been involved intermittently since the 1970s. The international community could use a positive incentive strategy by offering each side additional aid to encourage negotiations or a negative incentive strategy by threatening to withhold aid if the sides take actions that threaten the two-state solution. The United States, for example, might threaten to restrict its military aid to Israel should the country continue its settlement building in the West Bank or if it does not begin meaningful negotiations (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). By tying aid to negotiations, and what the international community hopes would be a final settlement, mediators might successfully induce and coerce both sides into negotiation and, eventually, settlement. While there is no guarantee that an incentive strategy would be successful, it demonstrates how mediators could use



such strategies to break an impasse in intractable conflicts, and create value by offering the warring sides incentive to compromise.

## **E. WHY MEDIATORS USE INCENTIVE STRATEGIES**

Incentive strategies are used primarily by actors with significant influence in the conflict's region. Actors include regional state powers, international hegemons, and both regional and international inter-governmental organizations (IGOs). These actors have the necessary interest and capabilities to contribute their resources on the conflict's outcome beyond the resource investments and risks to their reputation inherent in less intense forms of mediation.<sup>12</sup> Why would a mediator want to make such an investment? A mediator might see an incentive strategy as the best option for overcoming trust deficits, changing the status quo of the conflict and of negotiations, or to satisfy specific concerns of one or both sides. For example, following the May 1999 agreement between the Indonesian and Portuguese governments to end the fighting in East Timor, a UN official said, "I think the UN presence...should serve as a reassurance to them because the UN cannot do anything but ensure fair play" ("East Timor Deal," 1999).<sup>13</sup> The UN's incentive strategy overcame one of the impediments to a settlement because it ensured security following the settlement's signature. Its willingness to deploy peacekeepers to East Timor helped the sides overcome the mutual distrust that developed during the conflict, and it contributed to the attainment of a peace deal.

Mediators use incentive strategies for different reasons based on the conflict, actors, and the mediator's resources. A mediator might pledge economic aid to support a country's redevelopment, particularly in a country where a low Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita may have contributed to the outbreak of civil war (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998). A mediator's reasons for using an incentive strategy are probably similar to the reasons it initially involved itself in the conflict. A mediator uses an incentive strategy for five primary reasons: first, a mediator might perceive the economic, political, or

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<sup>12</sup> These costs might include paying for the sides to travel, hotel rooms, or other administrative costs associated with their facilitation.

<sup>13</sup> The CWM dataset categorizes the agreement between Indonesia and Portugal as a mediation event ending a civil war conflict.



humanitarian toll has become too great and determining that the conflict must be resolved. The cost may be in the people killed or an emerging humanitarian or refugee crisis. Local, regional, or international attention might pressure a mediator to “do more,” thereby compelling the mediator to consider increasing its commitment to the process. As the most costly form of mediation, an incentive strategy would demonstrate the mediator’s strong commitment to resolution.

Second, a mediator might have direct interests or investments in the territory in conflict. In this circumstance, a mediator might determine that an incentive strategy would protect its interests, which might be as simple as trying to preserve an ally’s hold on power or as complex as protecting a way of life or system of government—such as the fight between capitalism and communism during the Cold War. As an example, the United States used a negative incentive strategy when it withdrew its troops from the Dominican Republic in 1965 to limit the spread of communism at the height of the Cold War (“Collins Criticizes Use,” 1965).

Third, a mediator might have strategic interests in the country at war, or recognize that the conflict threatens its broader interests. The costs might be potential regional instability or threats to the global economy. For example, a civil war that threatens to disrupt the world’s oil or natural gas supply might prompt a mediator to use a more costly strategy to facilitate negotiation or a settlement to prevent the conflict from causing international economic damage. Affected states might also increase pressure on a mediator to resolve the conflict and prevent it from causing broader regional or international instability.

Fourth, a mediator might seek to enhance its prestige by using an incentive strategy to resolve a conflict. A potential mediator might see the conflict as an opportunity to enhance its standing in the international community by successfully resolving a conflict that may have appeared intractable. Incentive strategies are particularly valuable tools for actors of this ilk, who may be willing to go to exceptional lengths to ensure success in the negotiation. Mediators may view the cost of an incentive strategy as worthwhile for the enhanced prestige they gain.



Fifth, a mediator might turn to an incentive strategy if all other mediation strategies have been unsuccessful and the mediator is concerned about the implications of the negotiation's failure. The implications might be a return to fighting or a decline in the mediator's regional or international reputation. An incentive strategy may not be the preferred strategy in this situation—a mediator might choose to do nothing—but an incentive strategy represents one of a mediator's options if negotiations appear to be stalled or failing.

#### **F. WHEN MEDIATORS MIGHT USE INCENTIVE STRATEGIES**

Mediators will use incentive strategies when they perceive that these strategies will improve the chance for successful mediation. An incentive strategy's substantial cost will deter a mediator from making an offer unless it believes the strategy increases the chance the mediator will receive a return on the investment. Not all mediators have the capacity to use an incentive strategy because they lack the necessary resources to make a meaningful offer. For a mediator to use an incentive strategy, the sides in the conflict must believe that the mediator has both the capability to deliver on any offer and have an interest in the conflict's resolution (Kydd, 2003). Absent either capacity or capability, the mediator is unlikely to attempt any intercession at all, or defer to other mediation strategies. Figure 4 represents strategies an actor might use when electing to mediate a conflict. A mediator with high interest and substantial resources is represented in quadrant II of Figure 4. This quadrant is the only one of the four wherein a mediator might consider an incentive strategy. This mediator has the capacity and interest to use an incentive strategy, but will likely only resort to an incentive strategy in the belief that an incentive strategy will significantly affect the status quo and change the sides' perceptions of their interests, increasing the likelihood of a successful negotiation.



Figure 4. Circumstances that Dictate Mediation Strategy Selection

Resources	High	I Procedural strategy (or lower)	II Incentive strategy (or lower)
	Low	III Unlikely to mediate	IV Other elements of directive strategies (or lower)
		Low	High
		Interest	

Quadrant IV is where a mediator possesses high interest in a conflict's resolution, but has limited resources. The warring sides might not view an incentive strategy seriously because they would view the mediator as unable to deliver on its promises. For example, Turkey may want to use an incentive strategy to limit the instability caused by the Syrian civil war; however, it does not have the resources or cache to make a compelling offer. In quadrant III, a mediator does not have the interest or the resources to mediate a conflict and would be unlikely to intercede. Such an actor would not want to commit its limited resources to a conflict where it has little to gain. For example, a small and poor African country would not likely offer to facilitate negotiations in Southeast Asia, and even if it did, the warring parties in conflict would dismiss such an offer or view it suspiciously. In quadrant I, a mediator with substantial resources but low interest in a conflict is unlikely to enter the conflict as a mediator. Even if that actor offers to mediate, it is unlikely that the actor will agree to use an incentive strategy and devote its own resources to the conflict's mediation—the potential costs would be disproportionate to the return the actor would receive.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> In all circumstances represented in Figure 4, the mediator almost assuredly would first use less costly mediation strategies before resorting to more costly and intensive options, which is represented by the phrase “or lower” in quadrants I, II, and IV.



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### III. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

#### A. DEPENDENT VARIABLE

To understand whether and when a mediator might use an incentive strategy, I developed two standards of assessment for incentive strategies. First, I identified what type of mediator might use an incentive strategy in a mediation event drawing from the CWM dataset. I chose the CWM dataset because it is the most recent and arguably the most comprehensive dataset on civil war mediation. Additionally, it uses the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) definition of civil war, which is “a contested incompatibility that concerns government or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths” (Uppsala Universitet, n.d.). This definition is broader and more inclusive than the data that underlies other recent civil war mediation datasets (Kreutz, 2010; Regan et al., 2009).<sup>15</sup> To identify mediation events, the CWM uses the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset (Kreutz, 2010), the Diplomatic Intervention and Civil War (Regan et al., 2009), and public sources to identify individual civil war mediation events (DeRouen et al., 2011). It identified 460 separate mediation cases during 1946–2004, while my dataset included 478 mediation events for the period 1946–2010.<sup>16</sup>

My quantitative analysis aims to illuminate the relationship between the type of mediator and its use of an incentive strategy, and how various characteristics associated with the territory in civil war might be related to mediator’s using incentive strategies. The CWM dataset included the conflict, warring sides, and date of the mediation events. I

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<sup>15</sup> The authors of the CWM provided the author an updated version of the dataset for the research. The original CWM dataset can be found at <http://www.prio.no/jpr/datasets>. For more recent versions of the dataset, users can contact the dataset’s lead author. The UCDP/PRIO Conflict Termination dataset can be found at [http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp\\_conflict\\_termination\\_dataset/](http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_conflict_termination_dataset/).

<sup>16</sup> Extending the time frame from the conclusion of the CWM’s research in 2004 to 2010 accounts for some additional mediation events not listed in the original dataset. I also identified additional mediation events during the course of my research that had not been included in the CWM dataset. In this circumstance, I included the mediation event for the purposes of my analysis. In the circumstance that the CWM dataset included a mediation event, but I could not find a source referring to the mediation event or further investigation determined the event was not, in fact, a mediation event—for instance, if two warring sides met without a mediator—I defaulted to coding the event as a non-incentive strategy mediation event. Replication data for the findings can be found by contacting the author.



used this data to begin my research into the identities of the mediators for each event and whether the mediators used an incentive strategy. I researched every event that the CWM coded as having included a mediation event. Recall that I define an incentive strategy as when the mediator's offer includes deploying 500 peacekeepers or security forces to the warring country for more than 30 days, the promise of \$50 million in economic aid, or the use of a negative incentive strategy: a pledge to remove security forces from a country at war or withdraw economic support. I coded the dependent variable dichotomously on an actor-event basis and it equaled one for any actor-event in which the mediator used an incentive strategy. Each actor-event represented one actor from the mediation event and the event that occurred. Multiple events could take place during a conflict, a year, or even a month. I created separate observations for each mediation event where the two warring sides met to discuss potentially settling its conflict with an outside mediator. If more than one outside actor participated in a mediation event, I coded the actor-event a one for the mediator that was tied to the incentive strategy. For example, in a mediation event that involved the African Union and Nigeria, if the African Union suggested a multi-national peacekeeping force under its authority, I would code it as using an incentive strategy. I would code Nigeria as zero because it was not responsible for the incentive strategy.

In some circumstances, I was unable to determine what type of strategy the mediator used. If this were the case, I defaulted to coding the actor-events as a non-incentive strategy assuming any incentive strategy would be an offer substantial enough to warrant publicity either during the mediation or in historical reflections on the mediation process. The CWM dataset included the authors' determination of what type of strategy the mediator used. To ensure a consistent application of the incentive strategy definition throughout the research, I elected to research each mediation event independently to determine whether the mediator used an incentive strategy.

Each actor-event's observation included the actor's name and type: IGO, non-governmental organization (NGO), or state. Further, I separated positive and negative incentive strategies to permit more explicit quantitative research on the different types of incentive strategies, in addition to analyzing incentive strategies more broadly. I coded



positive and negative incentive strategies separately, but I also included a column for the general use of an incentive strategy. I coded a one in the incentive strategy column for every positive and negative incentive strategy to allow broader analysis of mediators' use of incentive strategies.

To identify whether a mediator used an incentive strategy, I examined print media articles around the date of the mediation event as specified in the CWM dataset. I examined the historical files of the New York Times and the British Broadcasting Company starting 10 days before the mediation event until 10 days after the event occurred or ended. Second, I examined the academic literature of the specific civil war—whether books, journal articles, or NGO publications on the history or legacy of a conflict. Third, I used the online resources of IGOs that may have participated in any mediation event for any indication that, for example, the UN Security Council passed any resolutions regarding its involvement or planned deployment of resources. Fourth, I used memoirs or historical literature written by participants in the war or mediation who had inside knowledge of the negotiations whose reflections might provide additional insight into the negotiation. Lastly, I conducted a general Internet search for any resources that might have been excluded from my other methodologies.<sup>17</sup> My research assumed that an incentive strategy offer was significant enough to merit being publicized whether at the time of the offer or in historical accounts of the events. Offers that have not yet been publicized or declassified have not been included in the dataset, though participants might be aware of them.

Of the 478 mediation events examined in my dataset, mediators used incentive strategies in 76 mediation events. Thus, incentive strategies are relatively rare, accounting for only 15.9 percent of mediation events since 1946,<sup>18</sup> probably because mediators explore less costly options before committing their assets and prestige. While some mediators might be willing to raise the stakes, others may simply prefer to abandon their

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<sup>17</sup> For this step, I closely scrutinized the source and its reliability before drawing any conclusions for my dataset. I considered print media, academic literature, NGO or IGO websites, and historical reflections as generally reliable.

<sup>18</sup> Previous scholarship suggested that directive strategies accounted for 29.6 percent of interstate conflict management (Gartner, 2014b).



role in the negotiations and walk away, rather than risk additional resources to the negotiation process. My quantitative analysis only examined incentive strategies as a subset of all mediation events, not as a subset of all civil war events. I further examined what type of actor offered an incentive strategy, creating separate dichotomous indicators for IGOs, NGOs, and states.

## **B. WHAT TYPES OF MEDIATORS USE INCENTIVE STRATEGIES?**

This section examines whether a certain type of mediator is more commonly associated with the use of particular incentive strategies. I grouped the type of mediator into three categories: IGOs, NGOs, and states. I use the definition of an IGO as “entities created with sufficient organizational structure and autonomy to provide formal, ongoing, multilateral processes of decisionmaking between states, along with the capacity to execute the collective will of their members (states)” (Volgy, Fausett, Grant, & Rodgers, 2008). Put another way, IGOs are formal organizations of states that contribute people and money to maintain their membership. Examples of IGOs include the UN, the African Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Union, among many others. Second, NGOs are organizations that are voluntary, non-profit distributing, formal, private, and self-governing (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). NGOs are distinct from IGOs because they do not represent a collection of states and may have niche interests, such as humanitarian or peace aims.<sup>19</sup> NGOs do not possess the same resources as IGOs because membership is voluntary and they are often issue-focused. The Carter Center, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, and Human Rights Watch are examples of NGOs. I also included former government officials acting in an informal capacity as NGOs, unless they participated in negotiations as a state’s official representative. Lastly, states are defined as “a community which consists of a territory and a population subject to an organized political authority” (Organization of American States, n.d.).

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<sup>19</sup> I categorize the Roman Catholic Church as an NGO despite it possessing many of the characteristics of a state because it does not have the capability to annex territory as other states do.



This thesis used these three broad categories because each is distinct and it allows for a clear analytic output. Future research could dissect these categories further and examine traits such as how a state's economic or political standing may affect its interest in mediating civil wars. NGOs are the least likely to use incentive strategies because they lack the capacity to implement such strategies. The strengths of NGO mediators are in facilitating communication and bringing sides together for talks rather than encouraging or coercing them toward settlement by offering to become part of any settlement. IGOs and states have the resources and, often, the reputations to back incentive strategy offers. IGOs are the most likely type of mediator to use an incentive strategy because they pool their members' resources—giving them the capacity to use an incentive strategy—and they lack territorial ambition, increasing the likelihood that the warring sides will accept an IGO's incentive strategy offer. Many of the operations these organizations implement are based on pooling global resources to address a humanitarian threat. States are less likely to shoulder the costs of an incentive strategy individually because they cannot pass those costs to others and would be singularly responsible, and lose prestige, if they withdrew resources after offering or implementing an incentive strategy.

H1: IGOs are the mediator type most associated with the use of incentive strategies.

This thesis also suggests that IGOs are more likely to be associated with positive incentive strategies. This type of mediation strategy allows IGO mediators to play a constructive role in a solution. Additionally, the presence of an IGO or its resources is unlikely to be an impediment to a solution, as is the case when states withdraw their resources as part of a negative incentive strategy. Thus, IGOs are more likely to suggest positive incentive strategies. These organizations probably would depart a warring country only because of security threats to its personnel, not as a condition of negotiations.

H2: IGOs are more associated with the use of positive incentive strategies than negative incentive strategies.



### **C. WHAT FACTORS WITHIN THE WARRING TERRITORY SUGGEST AN INCENTIVE STRATEGY?**

Next, this thesis examines the circumstances within the warring country to identify potential conditions that might be associated with a mediator's use of an incentive strategy. Two measures were used in the examination—the warring country's GDP per capita and its polity score—to evaluate whether the economic or political circumstances within the warring country might be related to a mediator's decision to use an incentive strategy.<sup>20</sup> These measures serve as proxies to understand whether the warring country's economic or political climate affect a mediator's choice of whether to use an incentive strategy. These two measures are associated with conditions that lead to an insurgent uprising or civil war, such as poverty and political instability, among other factors (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998, 2004; Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Hegre & Holtermann, 2012).

#### **1. Economic Factors Influencing the Use of Incentive Strategies**

If potential mediators are aware that economic conditions are one of the drivers of civil war, they might be inclined to use their own economic resources to overcome the economic conditions that may have contributed to the conflict's onset. Economic aid helps fill the gap left by the lack of foreign direct investment (Bandyopadhyay, Sandler, & Younas, 2013). Such expenditures in a country with a lower GDP per capita would have a greater impact than in a country with a higher GDP per capita; a mediator's money would go farther. Thus, mediators might be more inclined to use incentive strategies in those countries with a lower GDP per capita.

H3: Mediators are more likely to use incentive strategies in conflicts occurring in countries with lower GDPs per capita.

#### **2. Political Factors Influencing the Use of Incentive Strategies**

Previous scholarship has argued that countries in the middle of the polity scale are more prone to violence than those on either end (Hegre & Sambanis, 2006; Muller &

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<sup>20</sup> This analysis used the log of the GDP per capita of data derived from the World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>.



Weede, 1990; Regan & Henderson, 2002; Vreeland, 2008). These studies suggest that “under pure dictatorship, opportunities to organize are too limited and the probability of successful action low” (Vreeland, 2008, p. 401). On the democracy end of the spectrum, the population might not need to resort to violence because “pure democracy presents the possibility for peaceful collective action” (Vreeland, 2008, p. 401). The polity scale calls those in the middle of the scale anocracies, those regimes that do not have the characteristics of those at either end of the scale (Gurr, Marshall, & Jaggers, 2010). I use the warring country’s polity score to identify if the level of democracy or autocracy is related to whether a mediator might use an incentive strategy. I created three categories: strong autocracies, anocracies, and strong democracies.<sup>21</sup> Might a country’s polity score influence how a third-party actor might mediate that country’s civil war? Would powerful democracies, such as the United States, or large IGOs, such as the UN, use their influence and power to facilitate regime change and transition autocracies and anocracies toward democracy? Powerful mediators might use their assets in a warring country to facilitate the transition of that country to a democracy.

H4: Mediators are more likely to use incentive strategies in countries that are anocracies or autocracies.

How might a warring country’s polity score relate to a mediator’s decision to use a positive or negative incentive strategy? Mediators, particularly IGOs, are more likely to use positive incentive strategies in territories where they are attempting to transition the government to a more democratic regime probably because members of IGOs are often more democratic themselves (Donno, 2010; Rey & Barkdull, 2005). They may use the civil war and mediation as a peaceful means for facilitating regime transition and use their assets to encourage such a transition (Gleditsch & Ward, 2006). Thus, they will prefer that their assets be deployed to warring countries with similar regime characteristics.

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<sup>21</sup> I derived the data from the Polity IV Project. This dataset grades regime characteristics on a scale from -10 to 10, with 10 representing the greatest level of democracy, and -10 being the most severe autocracy (Gurr et al., 2010). The binary categories only examined the countries on the ends of the policy spectrum. I termed those countries with a polity score greater than or equal to 5 “strong democracies.” Similarly, I termed those countries with a polity score less than or equal to -5 “strong autocracies.” Those countries less than 5 but greater than -5 are anocracies.



H5: Mediators are more likely to use positive incentive strategies in warring countries with democratic regimes.

What might explain the relationship between a mediator's decision to use a negative incentive strategy and the warring country's regime type? The military aspect of negative incentive strategies suggest that the warring country suffers from external interference in its war. Early in the Cambodian civil war, Vietnam deployed its forces to protect its Cambodian government clients, and protect the authoritarian regime. Is this conflict representative of broader trends?

H6: Mediators are more likely to use negative incentive strategies in autocracies than in either anocracies or democracies.



## **IV. DISCUSSION OF QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS**

### **A. INITIAL FINDINGS**

This analysis used logit regression models to test the six hypotheses because the dependent variable is dichotomous. Table 2 is a listing of findings of the type of mediator most likely to use an incentive strategy and what characteristics within the warring country might be associated with a mediator's use of an incentive strategy.<sup>22</sup> Tables 3 and 4 are representations of the findings for positive and negative incentive strategies, respectively. The findings in Table 2 suggest that IGOs have a statistically significant positive relationship with mediators' use of incentive strategies—mediators that are IGOs are more likely to use incentive strategies than states or NGOs. There were no instances where an NGO used an incentive strategy in civil war mediation since 1946, according to my research. Thus, I used the state actor type as my excluded category when running my analysis.

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<sup>22</sup> See Appendix A for additional models. Appendix B compares the models' predictive capacity.



Table 2. Logit Model of Mediator Use of Incentive Strategies

<i>Dependent Variable: Incentive Strategies</i>	
IGO	1.674*** (0.284)
GDP Per Capita+	0.001 (0.135)
Democracy+	-0.264 (0.356)
Autocracy+	-0.662 (0.445)
Constant	-2.801*** (0.847)
Observations	659
Log Likelihood	-190.897
Akaike Inf. Crit.	391.795
<i>Notes:</i> *p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<0.01 +Characteristic of the country at war.	



Table 3. Logit Model of Mediator Use of Positive Incentive Strategies

<i>Dependent Variable: Positive Incentive Strategies</i>	
IGO	2.234*** (0.349)
GDP Per Capita+	-0.105 (0.161)
Democracy+	0.071 (0.400)
Autocracy+	-0.894* (0.539)
Constant	-2.882*** (0.998)
Observations	659
Log Likelihood	-151.660
Akaike Inf. Crit.	313.320
<i>Notes:</i> *p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<0.01 +Characteristic of the country at war.	



Table 4. Logit Model of Mediator Use of Negative Incentive Strategies

<i>Dependent Variable: Negative Incentive Strategies</i>	
IGO	-0.355 (0.606)
GDP Per Capita+	0.243 (0.251)
Democracy+	-1.415* (0.785)
Autocracy+	0.012 (0.714)
Constant	-4.765*** (1.582)
Observations	659
Log Likelihood	-69.287
Akaike Inf. Crit.	148.573
<i>Notes:</i> *p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<0.01 +Characteristic of the country at war.	



## **B. DISCUSSION OF H1 AND H2**

The statistically significant relationship between incentive strategies and IGOs confirms hypothesis, H1, that IGOs are more likely to be associated with the use of incentive strategies. There is a strong predictive relationship between a mediator as an IGO and its use of an incentive strategy. This is consistent with findings from previous studies of IGO involvement in civil war mediation (DeRouen et al., 2011; Regan et al., 2009). For example, Regan et al. found that different IGOs accounted for three of the top six actors involved in civil war mediation (2009).

What explains the relationship between IGOs and the use of incentive strategies? First, as I suggested in setting up the hypothesis, IGOs overcome the burdens that might incline a different type of mediator to use a less intense form of mediation. IGOs distribute the economic and political burdens of an incentive strategy. The IGO type of mediator consolidates the resources of its various member states, diffusing the cost of the incentive strategy for each individual member and taking on the responsibility of the implementation and execution of the strategy. Second, IGOs insulate its contributing states from the potential burdens and loss of prestige if a mission is to fail. In short, IGOs represent a scapegoat if an incentive strategy is to fail, and the member states can more easily avoid blame.

Turning to how the warring sides perceive incentive strategies from IGO mediators, the warring sides are probably less likely to view IGO incentive strategies as threatening or infringing on territories because IGOs do not have the capability to have territorial ambition, while states do. Mediators must ensure that warring factions do not construe an incentive strategy as a tool of modern imperialism. Outside military forces under the auspices of an IGO are restrained from taking action that the actors internal to the civil war conflict might see as infringing on their territory. Additionally, IGOs limit the power of any individual state, ensuring that the power or threat of any single state is balanced by the interests of the other members of the IGO.

The end of the Cold War might also be related to the relationship between IGO mediators and the use of incentive strategies. In the years following the Cold War, the



UN expanded its role internationally. The Soviet Union's collapse perhaps changed the international relations paradigm, resulting in opportunities for larger roles for IGOs, such as the UN. These organizations could use the end of the Cold War to "remake war-shattered states as liberal democracies" (Huntington, 1993; Lebovic, 2004; Paris, 2003, pp. 449–50). IGOs played more prominent security roles that included "diplomacy, peacekeeping, and peacemaking, thus preventing new conflicts from taking place and brokering peace agreements to end those that had already erupted" (Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010, p. 8). The UN, specifically, took on a more prominent role in the early 1990s, making IGO intervention in civil wars an accepted normative response to internal conflicts. For example, "From 1990 through 1993, the UN Security Council adopted a strikingly intrusive interpretation of UN Charter Chapter VII...Member states thus endorsed a radical expansion in the scope of collective intervention" expanding its mandate for "legitimate international intervention" (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006, p. 1). This expanded not only the UN's use of incentive strategies, but probably also sets a precedent for the UN's regional counterparts to use similar strategies to manage regional conflicts. Regional organizations might have taken a more aggressive approach to intervention if they wanted to prevent a more aggressive UN from initiating action or operations in the regional organization's area of influence.

IGO mediators had a statistically significant relationship with the use of positive incentive strategies, as indicated in Table 3, confirming H2. The ability of IGOs to pool resources for significant investments in warring countries probably drives this statistical relationship. Conversely, while not statistically significant, IGOs have a negative relationship with the use of negative incentive strategies. This finding is intuitive based on Table 1, where the majority of negative incentive strategies are associated with state-level decisions. IGOs' perception of human protection as one of their primary missions (Goulding, 1993; Hultman, Kathman, & Shannon, 2013), suggests they would want to deploy resources to a warring country, a positive incentive strategy, to help protect the population rather than withdraw those resources and increase the risk to the population, as would be the case in a negative incentive strategy. IGOs are more likely to use positive incentive strategies, where they can use their resources to help protect the population.



There are no instances where an IGO withdrew peacekeepers from a warring country in exchange for an agreement to continue negotiations. More likely, IGO withdrawals were related to an increase in violence or threat against its personnel, both circumstances that were independent of negotiations and not related to this investigation of the use of incentive strategies. Most negative incentive strategies involve an external state withdrawing support from one of the warring sides, or withdrawing troops from the country at war (see Table 1).

### **C. DISCUSSION OF H3**

The relationship between mediators' use of incentive strategies and the warring country's GDP per capita in Table 2 was limited, neither confirming nor rejecting H3. Based on the dataset, the relationship was not strong enough to be predictive for future events and the coefficient's value was near zero, suggesting that the dataset was not sufficient to identify a relationship between mediators' use of incentive strategies and the warring country's GDP per capita. Such a result might indicate that mediators do not consider the warring country's level of economic success or failure when evaluating whether to use an incentive strategy.

Despite the lack of concrete statistical findings, it is worth noting that there is evidence that a lower GDP per capita might be related to a mediator's use of incentive strategies. First, civil wars have significant negative effects on a country's workforce as the human capital in a country is enlisted to fight in the war, departs to avoid the war, is killed by the war, or regresses to more basic survival functions, rather than fueling economic output (Collier & Duponchel, 2013). Individuals that would normally be contributing to the territory's economy are distracted by war and survival. This reasoning explains why most countries at civil war have a low GDP per capita, and it also leaves the hypothesis and analysis susceptible to selection effects because the lack of a strong economic sector may have been a contributing factor to the civil war's start (Fearon, 2009, pp. 292–293; Fearon & Laitin, 2003). Separately, mediators might recognize that economic contributions are not productive in countries that lack strong governing institutions, and that aid contributed absent these institutions may decrease the likelihood



that a mediated settlement endures (Abuzeid, 2009). While mediators might want to provide economic aid, they are suspicious of doing so if the country does not have the institutional capacity to effectively use the aid. Afghanistan, for example, has been plagued by corruption stemming from a lack of institutional capability to manage the significant influx of aid since 9/11 (Fishstein & Wilder, 2012).

Mediators are more likely to use positive incentive strategies in countries with lower GDPs per capita, though the results in Table 3 suggest that the relationship is not statistically significant. The reasons offered would be consistent, though, with the economic aspects of negative incentive strategies, such as the use of sanctions or withdrawal of aid, as these have a limited effect on the poorest countries. Negative incentive strategies are more likely to be effective in countries with higher GDPs per capita where sanctions may hurt both warring sides and, perhaps, mobilize the population to urge each side for negotiations to alleviate or forestall sanctions.

#### **D. DISCUSSION OF H4, H5, AND H6**

Table 2 also suggests that the relationship between mediators' use of incentive strategies and the country's governing regime is negative—mediators are statistically less likely to use incentive strategies in countries that are considered strong democracies or strong autocracies as compared to anocracies. This confirms one aspect of H4 that suggested incentive strategies would be used more frequently in anocracies. This finding might also be subject to selection effects because anocracies are the most likely type of regime to be in a civil war in the first place. Thus there are more opportunities to mediate conflicts in anocracies than on the more extreme ends of the polity scale (Vreeland, 2008).

The findings for positive and negative incentive strategies are more illuminating. As indicated in Table 3, positive incentive strategies have a statistically significant negative relationship with autocracies suggesting that mediators are unwilling to consider deploying security forces or supplying aid to a warring country with an autocratic regime. Democratic regimes have a similar coefficient to the excluded category, anocracies, suggesting that the use of positive incentive strategies is similar for warring countries



with anocratic governing regimes. This partially confirms H5; mediators are more likely to use positive incentive strategies in democratic regimes than autocratic regimes.

Negative incentive strategies, similarly, have a statistically significant negative relationship with warring countries with democratic governing regimes, suggesting that mediators are less likely to use their most intense forms of leverage to facilitate negotiations in countries with democratic regimes. The coefficient for autocratic regimes suggests that its relationship to negative incentive strategies is similar to that of anocracies. This results is only a partial confirmation of H6.

A mediator's use of incentive strategies based on the polity score of the country at civil war may warrant further study. Identifying and controlling for the polity score of the state mediator that uses the incentive strategy and examining the relationship with the warring country's type of governing regime may provide insight into how these two variables interact. For example, might a democracy use an incentive strategy to defend a democracy? Alternatively, could a mediator use incentive strategies to facilitate a regime type change in a warring country? Further analysis might also examine how IGO mediators' use of incentive strategies relates to the country's polity score. These questions are outside the scope of this analysis but are worth further investigation.



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## **V. CASE STUDIES**

How does this quantitative understanding of incentive strategies translate to practical conflicts? Using two events from the 1990s, I will demonstrate how mediators' use of an incentive strategy changed the warring parties' calculations, leading to an eventual settlement. In each case, previous mediation attempts had been unsuccessful and the introduction of an incentive strategy influenced the warring factions. The first case is civil war in Sierra Leone, where the UN offered to significantly increase the number of troops deployed to the country to help overcome the rebel side's security concerns. This case demonstrates how an IGO, the type of mediator most strongly related to the use of incentive strategies, used its resources to influence the warring sides and facilitate a negotiated settlement. The second case examines Nagorno-Karabakh, an Azeri-majority territory belonging to Azerbaijan but adjacent to Armenia. It sought its independence in the late 1980s and early 1990s after disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Russia used its regional influence to convince Armenia to withdraw its troops from the area, overcoming what Azerbaijan had characterized as a major obstacle to any settlement. This case illustrates that a mediator must have substantial resources and interest in a civil war to use an incentive strategy—in this case, a negative incentive strategy. Lessons from these and other cases can be applied to current conflicts, such as the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, to enhance understanding of how an incentive strategy might improve prospects for negotiation.

### **A. SIERRA LEONE**

The July 1999 signing of the Lomé Peace Accord between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) came to fruition because the UN's offer to increase its presence in the country helped overcome the RUF's security



concerns.<sup>23</sup> After eight years of war, and multiple failed agreements between the two sides, the UN offered during the weeks leading up to the accord to expand its presence in Sierra Leone to up to 3,000 observers from the fewer than 200-person observer mission that had first deployed to the country in July 1998 (Onishi, 1999; United Nations, 2000; United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone, n.d.).<sup>24</sup> In October, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1270 (United Nations, 1999), authorizing the deployment of up to 6,000 military personnel as a new United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) expanding on its earlier promise during negotiations (United Nations, 1999).<sup>25</sup>

Previous negotiations and agreements between the sides had been unsuccessful, breaking down in the days or months after their implementation. The violence eventually led to a major RUF offensive resulting in the group taking control of the country's capital, Freetown, in early January 1999—which caused the UN observers to withdraw.<sup>26</sup> This point, with an ascendant insurgent actor and weakening government, typifies a potential “ripe” moment when one side sees itself in a strengthening position and willing to consider negotiation (as exhibited in Figure 2), while the previously stronger power sees negotiation as preferable to its potential military defeat (Mooradian & Druckman, 1999; Zartman, 1989). In the months following the RUF's seizure of Freetown, the

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<sup>23</sup> The civil war in Sierra Leone began in 1991 and by 1999 resulted in an estimated 50,000 killed and over a million displaced (Human Rights Watch, 1999). The RUF began in the country's east, but its fight extended to all parts of Sierra Leone shortly after its founding (Bellows & Miguel, 2006). Scholars have suggested that the government's weakness and inability to provide basic services for a significant portion of the population led groups, such as the RUF, to organize and use violence to confront the state (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Richards, 1996). Two previous peace agreements in late 1996 and 1997—the latter included the initial UN deployment as part of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL)—both collapsed (United Nations, 2000). The signatories to the Lomé Peace accords, in addition to the two sides, included Great Britain, Nigeria, the United Nations, and the United States (Neilan, 1999). The Economic Community of West African States hosted the 1999 talks that led to the Lomé Peace Accords in Togo.

<sup>24</sup> UNOMSIL was authorized by U.N Security Council Resolution 1181 in July 1998 and initially included the deployment of 85 personnel for a period of six months (United Nations, 2000; United Nations, 1998).

<sup>25</sup> UNAMSIL reached a peak of over 10,000 troops in 2001. The mission completed its mandate at the end of 2005 (University of Notre Dame, n.d.).

<sup>26</sup> The withdrawal of UNOMSIL does not constitute a negative incentive strategy because the withdrawal was not associated with negotiations—it was a result of security concerns—though it probably contributed to later calls for the resumption of negotiations.



United States, Great Britain, and the UN offered to host renewed talks to end the violence (The Sierra Leone Web, n.d.a). The negotiations, which eventually began in late May 1999, included the discussion of what an RUF spokesperson called the “composition of a cease-fire monitoring team, what role that team would play, and where it would be deployed,” probably a reference to an expanded UN mission, to satisfy the RUF’s concerns (The Sierra Leone Web, n.d.b). The RUF’s willingness to highlight its security concerns during the discussions demonstrates the criticality of the UN’s offer to deploy a more substantial peacekeeping force in helping the RUF overcome its security concerns. Further, the sides only signed the accord after “the presidents of neighboring nations came to Lomé...to press both sides to end a war that neither could win outright militarily”—suggesting a mutually hurting stalemate (Onishi, 1999). In addition to an expanded UN force, the World Bank agreed to release \$35 million in grants and loans to help rebuild infrastructure, Great Britain pledged \$10 million, and the European Union pledged \$30 million in humanitarian aid—demonstrating the mediators also used economic incentives to encourage the sides to reach an agreement (The Sierra Leone Web, n.d.b). While residual violence continued after the Lomé Peace Accord, the agreement represented the first step in reducing tensions between the two sides and rebuilding trust within the country (Bangura, 2000; Francis, 2000; Reno, 2001). Mediators used both aspects of a positive incentive strategy (troops and economic assistance) to influence the warring sides and coax them to consider both negotiation and settlement. Mediators made the offer at a ripe moment: when one side’s battlefield prospects were worsening and the other side’s prospects were improving. International mediators’ willingness to use a positive incentive strategy and expend their own resources to influence both sides led to a signed agreement settling the conflict.

## **B. RUSSIA**

Russia’s use of an incentive strategy to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh civil war in Azerbaijan demonstrates how a negative incentive strategy changed the warring sides’ calculations and overcame obstacles that had stymied previous mediation attempts by Russia, Iran, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe starting in 1991 (Magnusson, 2010; Mooradian & Druckman, 1999). The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict



became violent in 1988, after tensions dramatically increased at the end of 1987 (Cornell, 1999).<sup>27</sup> As violence escalated, Armenia deployed troops to protect ethnic Armenians (Magnusson, 2010). Following years of failed mediation efforts, Russia and Kyrgyzstan, with Armenian involvement, mediated negotiations in 1994 that led to the Bishkek Protocol being signed on May 5, ending the civil war (Melander, 2001). During this round of negotiations, the Armenians agreed to the “withdrawal of troops from occupied territories” in reference to its soldiers that had earlier deployed to Nagorno-Karabakh (Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, 1994). This was a crucial step for a settlement because the Azerbaijan government, upon signing the agreement, “made it clear that it did so only on the condition that a cease-fire would be followed by the withdrawal of Karabakh and Armenian forces from the districts in Azerbaijan” (Walker, 1998, p. 21).

Russia desired a prominent role in the mediation to reassert its authority in the region and fend off a potential increase in American, European, or Turkish influence (Cornell, 1999; Kydd, 2003; Walker, 1998). It supported Armenia initially when the conflict became violent, but switched its support to Azerbaijan and helped train Azeri forces after the country agreed to full membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States—an organization meant to protect Russian influence in the region (Betts, 1999; Lynch, 2002). Additionally, Russia threatened Azerbaijan “to accept the reentry of Russian troops as a separation force and as border guards...If Azerbaijan does not comply, Russia will step up its backing for Armenia” (Human Rights Watch, 1994, p. 143). Russia used power tactics throughout the mediation, including a negative incentive strategy, to force Armenia to withdraw its troops which, along with additional coercion, facilitated Azerbaijan’s acceptance of the ceasefire. Russia’s use of negative incentive strategies helped end the conflict’s violence and furthered its interests in both Armenia and Azerbaijan (Kydd, 2003). Russia’s interest in reasserting its authority in the region

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<sup>27</sup> Conflict between the Azeri and Armenian governments over Nagorno-Karabakh began in the early 1920s when Communist Party leaders in Moscow assigned the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan, angering adjacent Armenia (Mooradian & Druckman, 1999). The conflict became violent in early 1988 as rumors of Soviet willingness to transfer the predominantly ethnic Azeri territory to Armenia became widespread (Cornell, 1999). The conflict became a full-fledged civil war after a December 1991 independence referendum and the territory declaring its independence in January 1992 (Magnusson, 2010; Melander, 2001; Mooradian & Druckman, 1999).



was a primary factor in its willingness to use an incentive strategy during its mediation efforts.

### **C. APPLYING THE LESSONS OF INCENTIVE STRATEGIES TO AFGHANISTAN**

How can we use these conflicts to inform or predict mediator strategies for current conflicts? The statistical analysis and case study on Sierra Leone demonstrate that IGOs are the most common type of mediator to use incentive strategies. The case study on Russia in Nagorno-Karabakh illustrates how a mediator's personal interests influence whether the mediator will be willing to accept the costs of an incentive strategy. In my introduction, I suggested negotiations between the Taliban and Afghan government have made little progress despite significant international encouragement and effort. With the lack of success thus far, how might the international community, as mediators, help bring the sides together? The considerable international investment in the conflict suggests that a positive incentive strategy may not be successful. The use of international troops and investments has, thus far, been unsuccessful in defeating the Taliban on the battlefield or incentivizing them to negotiate. A pledge of more troops or aid could probably have very little effect on the negotiations, absent a major change on the battlefield that might precede a ripe moment. The deployment of international troops and international investment was never tied to pursuing negotiations, and has primarily been geared toward developing the Afghan government's capacity and defeating the Taliban. The international community might consider tying future deployments or contributions to negotiations. After nearly 15 years of conflict, it is uncertain whether more international investment or more security forces would incentivize a negotiated settlement. The significant investments made by the international community demonstrates actors' significant interest in seeing the conflict resolved.

The conflict demands a change in the status quo. Since the end of the surge in 2012, neither side has achieved an overwhelming victory on the battlefield, nor do events indicate that an outright military victory is likely, suggesting the conflict has long since reached a mutually hurting stalemate, but that the conditions have not been ripe for negotiation (Nordland, 2012; Zartman, 1989). The Afghan government and Taliban will



eventually have to consider a negotiated settlement to end the violence that began in the early 1980s. The international community's use of a negative incentive strategy might significantly change the status quo and encourage the sides to consider their future options more urgently and consider serious peace negotiations. Many other issues would still need to be addressed, but a withdrawal would satisfy one of the Taliban's preconditions for participating in negotiations and demand they live up to that long-held promise.

Perhaps the international military presence may be contributing to the lack of a "ripe" moment by artificially increasing both the Afghan government's capacity and through its support to the Afghan security force's operations (Peralta, 2015). The Taliban have been consistent in their public statements that one of their preconditions for negotiating with the Afghan government is the withdrawal of international forces—which, if it occurred, could be a negative incentive strategy (Raghavan, 2015). The international community might consider agreeing to this demand and tying any withdrawal to a Taliban guarantee to limit violence (a ceasefire) and engage in meaningful negotiations with the Afghan government. While violence probably would increase in the aftermath of an international withdrawal, it might advance the conflict to a point where a "ripe" moment for negotiation could occur.

Such a withdrawal would probably be exceptionally unpopular in the countries that have made substantial investments in Afghanistan since 2001 as part of the international coalition, and probably also among many Afghans. As an historical comparison, however, the United States' continued funding of the South Vietnamese after the United States' 1973 military withdrawal kept the South Vietnamese competitive with the North (Laird, 2005). Prior to the withdrawal, Henry Kissinger had negotiated an agreement between the North and South setting terms of outside interference in the country, though the Soviets quickly violated the agreement (Laird, 2005). The South did not collapse until that funding ceased in 1975. The example of Vietnam is instructive in demonstrating that financial support may be more critical to maintaining one side's governing capacity. The international community might consider withdrawing its forces—or significantly reducing their operations—so that the Taliban and Afghan



government can reach a ripe moment when the two sides agree to negotiate. The international community's military presence may be counteracting its efforts to encourage negotiations.



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## **VI. CONCLUSION**

### **A. IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDIES ON CONFLICT MEDIATION**

This paper suggests that IGOs can use their resources, and those of their members, to incentivize warring sides in a civil war to consider negotiation and potential settlement. The findings in this study can help predict mediator behavior and when a third-party might be willing to commit its own resources to a country in conflict. Mediators must first have both the resources and interest in seeing a conflict resolved before deciding to expend their own resources in a conflict. Parties that consider mediating will probably use an incentive strategy only when they have something to gain from a successful mediation, whether it is an increase in international prestige or preservation of their sphere of influence. The findings fill a gap in the mediation literature by describing the concept of incentive strategies and developing a new dataset to examine which circumstances predict when a mediator will use an incentive strategy.

This study examines the most intense and costly forms of mediation for a third-party mediator. It further parses incentive strategies into its positive and negative forms, which are differentiated by whether the mediator deploys or withdraws resources, respectively, from a civil war territory. Positive incentive strategies include the deployment of troops or peacekeepers or the provision of increased aid, in exchange for the warring sides making progress in negotiations. IGO mediators are most strongly related to the use of positive incentive strategies, probably because these mediators pool its members resources, diffuse responsibility, and warring sides are more likely to accept incentive strategies from IGOs because these mediator types do not have territorial ambitions. Negative incentive strategies are primarily exercised by state mediators and are defined by the withdrawal of troops from a warring territory or the use of sanctions as leverage in encouraging the warring sides to negotiate. These strategies are unique because they are tied directly to the warring sides making progress in negotiations to settle their conflict, not to strengthening one side in the conflict. These concepts highlight other forms of leverage mediators might use in a civil war conflict to encourage negotiations and, eventually, settlement. Positive incentive strategies are used in almost



80 percent of incentive strategies, but the introduction and explanation of negative incentive strategies suggests additional options for third-party mediators to consider. Negative incentive strategies have been used by mediators in civil wars 16 times since 1946. Understanding these two types of incentive strategies and the circumstances that may be associated with their use enhances the international mediation scholarship.

## **B. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This thesis examined only the occasions when mediators offered incentive strategies; it did not examine the degree of effectiveness of those strategies in leading to settlements, or improving settlement duration. Many previous studies have examined the effectiveness of directive strategies, and future study might examine how the focus on the more costly incentive strategy aspects of directive strategies affect negotiations and settlements, and how durable those settlements might be (Bercovitch & Lee, 2003; Gartner, 2014a; Gartner, 2011). Scholars might also compare positive and negative incentive strategies and examine whether changing the parameters of incentive strategies—such as adjusting the number of peacekeepers or the level of economic aid—affects the results. These studies might also consider the use of technocrats and election monitors in civil war mediation and how the offer or deployment of such resources might affect negotiations or settlement durability (Genicot & Skaperdas, 2002). Additionally, I used a definition of an incentive strategy that did not consider the proportionality of the incentive strategy offer. For example, the peacekeepers needed for an incentive strategy in Papua New Guinea would not be the same as those needed for a conflict in Sudan. Future study might examine the use of incentive strategies proportionally to the country's population or the scope of the conflict, rather than using a strict definition ignoring the location, population, and magnitude of the conflict.

Why do third-parties expend their resources in another country or territory's civil war? On one hand, they might be concerned about the potential spillover of the conflict outside the warring territory, or threat to regional stability. On the other hand, they might be trying to protect or expand their sphere of influence. One way to explore this dynamic further might be to examine the mediator's historical investment in or relationship with



the warring parties, or examine the intensity of the conflict and if its lethality affected a mediator's decision to use an incentive strategy. Another gap worth examining is the point in a conflict at which it would be best to offer an incentive strategy. Helping mediators understand when a ripe moment is approaching provides insight into when the warring sides might be most amenable to an incentive strategy and when the mediator might receive the greatest return for their investment based on the length or intensity of the conflict.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

Practitioners and scholars have sought to understand more fully how to end civil wars by negotiation. These conflicts became common in the latter half of the 20th century, and are the dominant form of war early in the 21st century. This study argues that powerful mediators might use their resources or influence to change a civil war's status quo and incentivize or coerce the warring sides to consider negotiated resolution—what I term an incentive strategy. Incentive strategies can be either positive—where a mediator suggests deploying its resources to a warring territory—or negative—where the mediator withdraws its resources from the conflict in exchange for the warring sides making progress in negotiations. Mediators are most likely to use these strategies when they have both the resources and interests in seeing the conflict resolved. Mediators that are IGOs are more strongly associated with the use of incentive strategies than either state or NGO mediators. Finally, circumstances within the warring country, such as the country's polity score, are related to a mediator's use of incentive strategies.

Incentive strategies are the most intense and costly strategy that mediator's might use in civil war conflicts and suggest that the mediator has significant interest in facilitating a civil war conflict's resolution.



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## APPENDIX A. ADDITIONAL LOGIT MODELS OF MEDIATORS' USE OF INCENTIVE STRATEGIES IN CIVIL WAR MEDIATION

Table 5. Additional Logit Models of Mediators' Use of Incentive Strategies in Civil War Mediation

	<i>Dependent Variable: Incentive Strategies</i>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IGO	1.674*** (0.284)	1.483*** (0.256)				
GDP Per Capita+	0.001 (0.135)					-0.038 (0.096)
Democracy+	-0.264 (0.356)			-0.273 (0.258)	-0.353 (0.271)	
Autocracy+	-0.662 (0.445)		-0.177 (0.394)		-0.354 (0.414)	
Constant	-2.801*** (0.847)	-2.899*** (0.201)	-2.186*** (0.135)	-2.089*** (0.166)	-2.009*** (0.185)	-1.945*** (0.664)
Observations	659	754	697	697	697	715
Log Likelihood	-190.897	-228.496	-224.936	-224.474	-224.086	-231.254
Akaike Inf. Crit.	391.795	460.992	453.872	452.948	454.171	466.507

Notes:

\*p<.1 \*\*p<.05 \*\*\*p<0.01

+Characteristic of the country at war.



Table 6. Additional Logit Models of Mediators' Use of Positive Incentive Strategies in Civil War Mediation

	<i>Dependent Variable: Positive Incentive Strategies</i>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IGO	2.234*** (0.349)	1.954*** (0.309)				
GDP Per Capita+	-0.105 (0.161)					-0.049 (0.107)
Democracy+	0.071 (0.400)			-0.131 (0.283)	-0.254 (0.296)	
Autocracy+	-0.894* (0.539)		-0.463 (0.483)		-0.593 (0.504)	
Constant	-2.882*** (0.998)	-3.472*** (0.262)	-2.405*** (0.148)	-2.398*** (0.188)	-2.275*** (0.206)	-2.128*** (0.742)
Observations	659	754	697	697	697	715
Log Likelihood	-151.660	-187.865	-191.927	-192.333	-191.559	-196.268
Akaike Inf. Crit.	313.320	379.731	387.855	388.665	389.117	396.535
<i>Notes:</i>						
*p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<0.01						
+Characteristic of the country at war.						



Table 7. Additional Logit Models of Mediators' Use of Negative Incentive Strategies in Civil War Mediation

	<i>Dependent Variable: Negative Incentive Strategies</i>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IGO	-0.355 (0.606)	-0.442 (0.583)				
GDP Per Capita+	0.243 (0.251)					-0.050 (0.196)
Democracy+	-1.415* (0.785)			-0.894 (0.589)	-0.862 (0.618)	
Autocracy+	0.012 (0.714)		0.497 (0.655)		0.121 (0.688)	
Constant	-4.765*** (1.582)	-3.701*** (0.292)	-3.899*** (0.292)	-3.491*** (0.306)	-3.523*** (0.359)	-3.439** (1.349)
Observations	659	754	697	697	697	715
Log Likelihood	-69.287	-77.167	-72.157	-71.132	-71.117	-76.582
Akaike Inf. Crit.	148.573	158.333	148.314	146.264	148.234	157.164

Notes:

\*p<.1 \*\*p<.05 \*\*\*p<0.01  
+Characteristic of the country at war.



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## **APPENDIX B. COMPARING THE STATISTICAL MODELS USING RECEIVER OPERATING CHARACTERISTIC CURVE ANALYSIS**

Of the models analyzed, which is best for predicting a mediator's use of an incentive strategy? Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve analysis compares which of the models in Table 5 best discriminates between when mediators actually offer an incentive strategy, and when the model might falsely predict the mediator offering an incentive strategy. ROC analysis visualizes the performance of the binary classifier, in this case, whether a mediator used an incentive strategy. ROC analysis establishes the best decision criterion, the point when a model will capture the most "true positives" and minimize the capture of "false positives."<sup>28</sup>

ROC analysis compares models based on their sensitivity and "1-specificity." The sensitivity is measured between 0 and 1, with 1 being the most sensitive. A ROC analysis with maximum sensitivity would capture 100 percent of the true positives, ensuring that it would not omit any actual outcomes. However, such an acutely sensitive test would also capture 100 percent of the false positives, meaning the test would provide no insight. Conversely, a test with a sensitivity of 0 would omit all false positives, but also omit all the true positives, providing no insight.

Figure 5 compares the six models in Table 5 using ROC analysis. The ROC analysis demonstrates that the six models have differing predictive powers. Table 8 includes the Area Under the Curve (AUC) values for each of the six models.<sup>29</sup> Model 1 had the greatest predictive power in determining whether a mediator might use an incentive strategy based on its AUC value. Model 2 has a similar predictive power suggesting that the mediator's identity as an IGO has the greatest influence on improving

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<sup>28</sup> The true positive rate responds to the question of "how often did the model predict a mediator would use an incentive strategy when the mediator did, in fact, use an incentive strategy?" The opposite, false positive rate, responds to the question of "how often did the model incorrectly predict a mediator would use an incentive strategy when the mediator did not use an incentive strategy?" The British military first used ROC analysis during WWII (Swets, 1973). They sought a methodology to set the decision criterion that captured enemy aircraft (true positive), but did not suggest an invasion when radar merely detected a flock of birds (false positive).

<sup>29</sup> The AUC statistic is measured from .5 to 1, with .5 representing a model of no predictive value and 1 representing a theoretically perfect model.



a model's predictive power of when a mediator might use an incentive strategy. The AUC values for the other models are all near .5, indicating these models are limited in their ability to differentiate when mediators may use incentive strategies.

Figure 5. Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve for the Models in Table 5

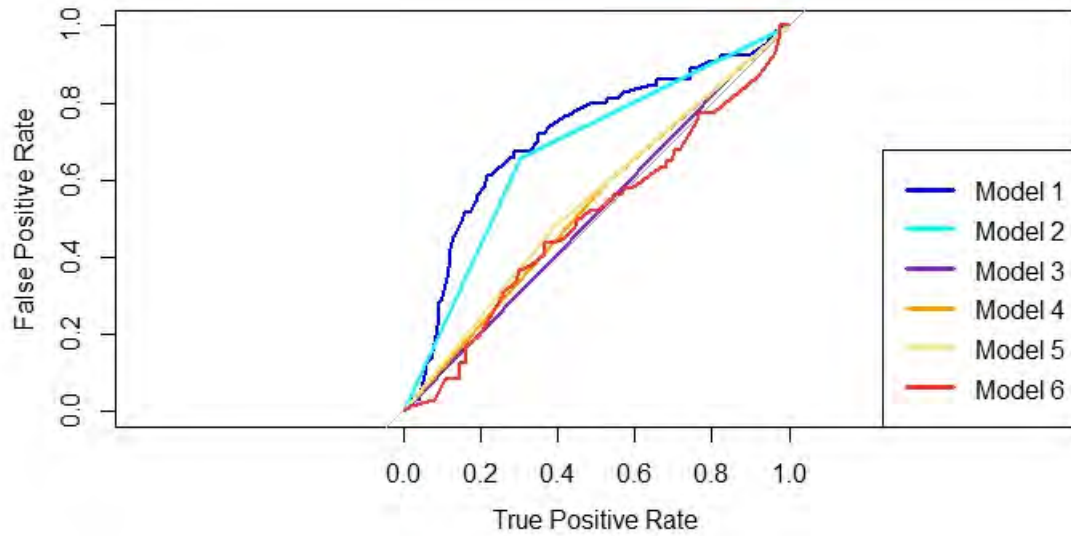


Table 8. Area Under Curve Values for Each Model

Model	AUC
1	.7117
2	.677
3	.5097
4	.5336
5	.5433
6	.4975



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